



# Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road  
Groton, CT 06340-4394  
Town Clerk 860-441-6640  
Town Manager  
860-441-6630

## Meeting Minutes

### Representative Town Meeting

**Moderator Jean-Claude Ambroise, Representatives Karin Adams, Scott W. Aument, Sr., Joseph Baril, Nancy E. Barnhart, Alicia Bauer, Genevieve Cerf, Susan Chase-Hildebrand, Michael Collins, Christine Conley, Susan Deane-Shinbrot, Luanne E. DeMatto, Nancy Driscoll, Dave Ferreira, Neal Gardner, Nancy E. Gilly, Patrice Granatosky, Lorraine M. Greubel, Karen Hatcher, Keith L. Hedrick, Conrad F. Heede, Lynn Crockett Hubbard, Rosanne E. Kotowski, Jim Loughlin, Jackie Massett, Bruce A. McDermott, Roscoe Merritt, Scott Newsome, Richard J. Pasqualini, Jr., Pam Ryley, Jack Sebastian, Dana S. Semeraro, Richard Semeraro, Joan Steinfeld, Irma Streeter, Mark Svencer, Archie C. Swindell, Lori A. Watrous, Amanda L. Whewell and Ivy R. Williams**

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Wednesday, April 10, 2013

7:30 PM

Groton Senior Center

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#### REGULAR MEETING

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#### A. ROLL CALL

*Moderator Jean-Claude Ambroise called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.*

*31 members were present, and a quorum was declared.*

*The Moderator reported that Reps. Hatcher and Pasqualini notified the Town Clerk of their absence.*

Members Present: Moderator Ambroise, Rep. Adams, Rep. Aument, Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Chase-Hildebrand, Rep. Collins, Rep. Conley, Rep. Deane-Shinbrot, Rep. Driscoll, Rep. Ferreira, Rep. Gardner, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Greubel, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Heede, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Massett, Rep. McDermott, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Ryley, Rep. D. Semeraro, Rep. R. Semeraro, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Swindell, Rep. Watrous and Rep. Williams  
Members Absent: Rep. Cerf, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Hatcher, Rep. Hubbard, Rep. Loughlin, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. Sebastian and Rep. Whewell

*Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, School Superintendent Dr. John Ramos, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.*

#### B. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

*The members observed a moment of silence followed by the Salute to the Flag led by Dr. Ramos.*

#### C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 13, 2013

*A motion that the minutes be approved was made by Rep. Adams, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld.*

*The vote to approve the minutes carried 28 in favor, 3 abstentions. (Abstaining: Reps. Barnhart, Hedrick and Streeter.)*

#### D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

*Kevin Trejo, 536 Shennecossett Road, asked that budget reductions be fair and balanced. He clarified that the RTM should not take an approach similar to the Town Council's for reductions. He stated that budget reductions should be equal for Groton City, Groton Long Point and Center Groton accounts.*

#### E. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

*Moderator Ambroise asked members to pick up their budget books at the Town Clerk's office. He reminded members that the Town Council's budget review sessions are being televised and encouraged them to watch the sessions. He announced that the RTM Annual Budget Meeting agenda will be sent out on Monday April 15, 2013. He reported that he received communications concerning magnet school transportation and the budget.*

#### F. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

**1. Financial report**

*Mr. Oefinger reported that the Fund Balance as of March 31, 2013 is approximately \$9.3 million; the General Contingency balance is \$275,608; the Capital Reserve balance is \$1,274,085.*

**2. Monthly briefing**

*The Town Manager highlighted various items from the Town Manager's News. He announced that Kristin Havrilla Clarke has started as Economic Development Specialist replacing Barbara Strother. She is a Groton native, having graduated from Fitch High School, and having worked as an intern in the Planning Department and as a curator at the Jabez Smith House.*

*In response to representatives' questions, the Manager noted that fourth quarter transfers are expected for legal services due to increased use and for Public Works for snow removal due to the number of severe winter storms. He addressed the status of the police study and noted that the Town Council and three police departments need to meet with the consultant for review of the draft. The Manager updated members with information in regard to the Pfizer complex. He acknowledged that an update on economic development by Kristin Havrilla Clarke will be scheduled in the near future.*

**G. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

*Dr. Ramos reported that the Board of Education has completed school redistricting to address overcrowding in the school system. He explained the implementation process that is under way to assist parents and students during the transition for next year.*

*In response to questions, Dr. Ramos noted the various security measures that are completed and have been implemented since December 2012. He mentioned that additional monies are necessary to secure all classroom doors with interior locks and that a CIP request is included in the FYE2014 budget. He provided information on the current status of the BOE's selection process for a new school superintendent.*

**H. LIAISON REPORTS**

*No reports.*

**I. COMMITTEE REPORTS****1. FINANCE - Chairman Granatosky**

*No meeting, no report.*

**2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SERVICES - Chairman Ferreira**

*No meeting, no report.*

**3. EDUCATION - Chairman Hedrick**

*No meeting, no report.*

**4. RECREATION - Chairman Streeter**

*No meeting, no report.*

**5. PUBLIC SAFETY - Chairman Pasqualini**

*No meeting, no report.*

**6. PUBLIC WORKS - Chairman Collins**

*No meeting, no report.*

**7. RULES & PROCEDURES - Chairman Massett**

*Moderator Ambrose noted that a motion to veto is the only appropriate action on this item.*

*Chairman Massett read the minutes of the meeting held on April 10, 2013. (Minutes are attached to the permanent record.)*

*Motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Barnhart, seconded by Rep. Baril.*

*Rep. D. Semeraro clarified that in committee she suggested the formation of a task force with the Town Council to further consolidate voting districts.  
The vote to approve the minutes carried unanimously.*

2013-0073

**Adoption of an Ordinance Changing and Redefining the Voting Districts****ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE CHANGING AND REDEFINING THE VOTING DISTRICTS IN THE TOWN OF GROTON**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF GROTON:

That Section 6-1 of the Code of Ordinances, "Voting Districts", consisting of Ordinance Nos. 105, 212, 217, and 254 adopted by the Town Council on October 2, 1972, February 18, 1992, March 2, 1993 and July 2, 2002, respectively, is hereby repealed, and the following ordinance is hereby enacted in lieu thereof:

1. The following areas shall hereafter constitute the Voting Districts in the Town of Groton and are hereby adopted to conform to the 2011 Plan of Congressional Districting approved by the State of Connecticut Supreme Court on February 10, 2012 and published by the State of Connecticut Secretary of State on February 15, 2012, and to enact other changes to be made hereby by the Groton Town Council pursuant to Town of Groton Charter § 3.7:

**FIRST VOTING DISTRICT**

Beginning at the northeast corner of this voting district at a point at the intersection of the centerline of Flanders Road and the centerline of the southbound lane of Interstate Route 95; thence running southerly with the centerline of Flanders Road to a point at its intersection with the centerline of Fort Hill Road (U.S. Route 1), thence running southerly and westerly with the centerline of Fort Hill Road (U.S. Route 1) to a point at the intersection with the centerline of Fort Hill Brook; thence running southerly with the centerline of Fort Hill Brook to Mumford Cove; thence running southerly with the centerline of Mumford Cove and crossing Fishers Island Sound to the south boundary of the Town of Groton; thence running westerly along the south boundary of the Town of Groton to its intersection with the east boundary of the City of Groton; thence running northerly along the east boundary of the City of Groton through Baker Cove; thence running northwesterly and northerly along the east boundary of the City of Groton through Baker Cove and Birch Plain Creek to an angle point in the City of Groton boundary on the south side of Poquonnock Road; thence running northwesterly along the City of Groton boundary and the south side of Poquonnock Road to an angle point in the City of Groton boundary; thence running northerly along the City of Groton boundary to its intersection with the centerline of Meridian Street Extension; thence running southeasterly and easterly with the centerline of Meridian Street Extension to Long Hill Road (U.S. Route 1); thence running northwesterly with the centerline of Long Hill Road (U.S. Route 1) to the intersection with the centerline of the southbound lane of Clarence B. Sharp Highway (Connecticut Route 349); thence running easterly with the centerline of the southbound lane of Clarence B. Sharp Highway (Connecticut Route 349) to its intersection with the centerline of the Interstate Route 95 exit 87 southbound ramp; thence running easterly with the centerline of the Interstate Route 95 exit 87 southbound ramp to its intersection with the centerline of the southbound lane of Interstate Route 95; thence running easterly with the centerline of the southbound lane of Interstate Route 95 to its intersection with the centerline of Flanders Road and to the point of the beginning. All areas lying within the foregoing boundaries shall constitute the First Voting District of the Town of Groton.

**SECOND VOTING DISTRICT**

Beginning at the northwest corner of this voting district at a point on the GROTON-NEW LONDON town line; thence running due east to the intersection of Eastern Point Road and Nicholas Avenue; thence running easterly with the centerline of Nicholas Avenue to Benham Road; thence crossing Benham Road to Hynes Avenue and continuing easterly with the centerline of Hynes Avenue to Brandegee Avenue; thence running northerly with the centerline of Brandegee Avenue to Rainville Avenue; thence running easterly and northeasterly with the centerline of

Rainville Avenue to Poquonnock Road; thence running southeasterly with the centerline of Poquonnock Road to a point on the east boundary of the City of Groton; thence running southerly along the east boundary of the City of Groton to an angle point in the City of Groton boundary on the south side of Poquonnock Road; thence running southeasterly along the City of Groton boundary to the east boundary of the City of Groton; thence running southerly and southeasterly along the east boundary of the City of Groton through Birch Plain Creek and Baker Cove; thence running southerly along the east boundary of the City of Groton through Baker Cove and Fishers Island Sound to the south boundary of the Town of Groton; thence running westerly along the south boundary of the Town of Groton; thence running northerly along the GROTON-NEW LONDON town line to a point due west of the intersection of Eastern Point Road and Nicholas Avenue and to the point of the beginning. All areas lying within the foregoing boundaries shall constitute the Second Voting District of the Town of Groton.

#### THIRD VOTING DISTRICT

Beginning at the northwest corner of this voting district and the northwest corner of the City of Groton; thence running easterly along the north boundary of the City of Groton and the north side of Grove Avenue; thence running southeasterly, southerly and southeasterly along the northeast boundary of the City of Groton to a point in the vicinity of Meridian Street Extension; thence running southerly along the east boundary of the City of Groton on to a point in the centerline of Poquonnock Road; thence running northwesterly with the centerline of Poquonnock Road to Rainville Avenue; thence running southwestly and westerly with the centerline of Rainville Avenue to Brandegee Avenue; thence running southerly with the centerline of Brandegee Avenue to Hynes Avenue; thence running westerly with the centerline of Hynes Avenue to Benham Road; thence crossing Benham road to Nicholas Avenue and continuing westerly with the centerline of Nicholas Avenue to Eastern Point Road; thence running due west to the GROTON-NEW LONDON town line; thence running northerly along the GROTON-NEW LONDON town line to the northwest corner of the City of Groton and to the point of the beginning. All areas lying within the foregoing boundaries shall constitute the Third Voting District of the Town of Groton.

#### FOURTH VOTING DISTRICT

Beginning at the northwestern corner of this voting district running along the GROTON-LEDYARD town line to the intersection of North Road (Connecticut Route 117); thence running southerly with the centerline of North Road (Connecticut Route 117); thence running westerly with the centerline of the southbound lane of Interstate Route 95 to its intersection with the Interstate Route 95 exit 87 southbound ramp; thence running southwestly with the centerline of the Interstate Route 95 exit 87 southbound ramp to its intersection with U.S. Route 1; thence running southeasterly with the centerline of U.S. Route 1 to the intersection of Meridian Street Extension; thence running westerly and northwesterly with the centerline of Meridian Street Extension to its intersection with the easterly boundary of the City of Groton; thence running northerly and northwesterly along the northeast boundary of the City of Groton to a point on the north side of Grove Avenue; thence running westerly along the north boundary of the City of Groton to the GROTON-NEW LONDON town line; thence running northerly along the GROTON-NEW LONDON town line and the GROTON-WATERFORD town line to its intersection with the GROTON-LEDYARD town line and to the point of the beginning. All Areas lying within the foregoing boundaries shall constitute the Fourth Voting District of the Town of Groton.

#### FIFTH VOTING DISTRICT

Beginning at the northeast corner of this district and the northeast corner of the Town of Groton at a point in Hyde Pond; thence running southerly along the GROTON-STONINGTON town line through Whitford Brook and the Mystic River to its intersection with the centerline of the south bound lane of Interstate Route 95; thence running westerly with the centerline of the south bound lane of Interstate 95 to its intersection with the centerline of Connecticut Route 117; thence running northerly with the centerline of Connecticut Route 117 to its intersection with the

GROTON-LEDYARD town line; thence running easterly along the GROTON-LEDYARD town line to the point of beginning. All areas lying within the foregoing boundaries shall constitute the Fifth Voting District of the Town of Groton.

#### SIXTH VOTING DISTRICT

Beginning at the northeast corner of this voting district at a point where the centerline of the south bound lane of Interstate Route 95 crosses the GROTON-STONINGTON town line in the Mystic River; thence running southerly along the GROTON-STONINGTON town line through the Mystic River to a point southeasterly of the railroad bridge over Beebe Cove; thence running northwesterly through the railroad bridge over Beebe Cove to a point in Beebe Cove west of Half Penny Island; thence running northerly in Beebe Cove to a point in line with the prolongation southeasterly of the centerline of Fishtown Road; thence running northwesterly with the prolongation of Fishtown Road, crossing Beebe Cove, the shore and Elm Street (Connecticut Route 215) to Fishtown Road; thence running northwesterly and northerly with the centerline of Fishtown Road to its intersection with New London Road (U.S. Route 1) and Noank Ledyard Road; thence running northerly, northeasterly and northerly with the centerline of Noank Ledyard Road to its intersection with the centerline of the south bound lane of Interstate Route 95; thence running easterly with the centerline of the south bound lane of Interstate Route 95 to the GROTON-STONINGTON town line and to the point of the beginning. All areas lying within the foregoing boundaries shall constitute the Sixth Voting District of the Town of Groton.

#### SEVENTH VOTING DISTRICT

Beginning at a point on the GROTON-STONINGTON town line southeast of the railroad bridge over Beebe Cove; thence running southerly along the GROTON-STONINGTON town line to the south boundary of the Town of Groton; thence running westerly along the south boundary of the Town of Groton to a point south of Mumford Cove; thence running northerly along the centerline of Mumford Cove to Fort Hill Brook; thence running northerly along the centerline of Fort Hill Brook to its intersection with the centerline of Fort Hill Road (U.S. Route 1); thence running easterly with the centerline of Fort Hill Road (U.S. Route 1) to the intersection of Flanders Road; thence running northerly along the centerline of Flanders Road to its intersection with the centerline of the south bound lane of Interstate Route 95; thence running easterly with the centerline of the south bound lane of Interstate Route 95 to its intersection with the centerline of Noank Ledyard Road; thence running southerly, southwesterly and southerly with the centerline of Noank Ledyard Road to its intersection with New London Road (U.S. Route 1) and Fishtown Road; thence running southerly and southeasterly with the centerline of Fishtown Road to its intersection with Elm Street (Connecticut Route 215); thence running southeasterly along the prolongation southeasterly of the centerline of Fishtown Road, crossing Elm Street (Connecticut Route 215), to the shore and Beebe Cove; thence running southerly in Beebe Cove to a point west of Half Penny Island and northwesterly of the railroad bridge over Beebe Cove; thence running southeasterly in Beebe Cove through the railroad bridge to the GROTON-STONINGTON town line and to the point of the beginning. All areas lying within the foregoing boundaries shall constitute the Seventh Voting District of the Town of Groton.

2. Changes to Districts One, Four and Five have been made as required by the 2011 Redistricting Plan enacted by the State of Connecticut.
3. By vote of the Groton Town Council, the former Districts Four and Five have been combined. The resulting district will henceforth be known as District Four.
4. By vote of the Groton Town Council, a portion of District 8 has been combined with District 1.
5. Districts Six, Seven and Eight have been renumbered to reflect the combining of Districts Four and Five. Henceforth, District Six will be known as District Five; District Seven will be known as District Six; and District Eight will be known as District Seven.

**This matter was Not Vetoed for April 10, 2013.**

**J. BUDGET DISCUSSIONS**

*Rep. McDermott suggested that viewing the broadcast of the Town Council budget review sessions is beneficial prior to the RTM sessions. It provides information on the Council's rationale for reductions and may prevent unnecessary discussion on small accounts and allow the RTM to concentrate on the large cost centers. He feels that a concentrated effort for reductions to the major cost centers is essential to realize the most savings.*

*Rep. Aument noted that the RTM's May 6 budget session presents a conflict for some members due to City of Groton elections. He commented that reductions should be implemented fairly.*

*In response to Rep. D. Semeraro, the Town Manager provided members with a memo "FYE 2014 Budget - Zero Mill Rate Increase". He commented on the proposals included in the memo, but cautioned members that he is not recommending any reductions by the RTM to the accounts mentioned in the memo. He reviewed several statistical spreadsheets from Municipal Fiscal Indicators that illustrate Groton's standing in comparison to Connecticut's other 168 towns. The indexes provided were: Debt per Capita, Education Expenditures per Pupil, Tax Levy per Capita, Property Tax Revenue as a Percent of Total Revenue and Equalized Mill Rate. He noted that Groton is 146 out of 169 for mill rate. He explained that this means that most other towns have higher mill rates than Groton. He reported that tax increases last year were attributable to the revaluation but that 90% of taxpayers' bills either stayed the same or went down. He mentioned that a tax analysis of the RTM demonstrated that taxes decreased for 27 members and increased for 7 members (two of which were attributable to construction and one to a miscalculation the previous year). Four members were living in apartments.*

*Moderator Ambrose thanked the Town Manager for providing the information. He clarified that after the Town Council reductions to date, the RTM would need to approve \$2,755,000 in reductions to arrive at a zero mill rate increase budget.*

*The Town Manager stressed that he is not endorsing the reductions listed in the memo. He feels it will hurt the community and cause a downward trend in services. It will cause annual budget spikes to individual accounts when it is necessary to replace large and expensive items. He stated that it has been his practice to plan long term for replacement of expensive items to decrease annual fluctuations in the budget.*

*Rep. Swindell commended the Town Manager on the information provided. He cautioned members to remember that reductions in services will affect the quality of life in Groton. He noted that if Groton is trying to promote economic development and attract new businesses and residents, it is essential to maintain a good quality of life. He endorses looking into the future for opportunities to consolidate services but not necessarily the method that is being used this year by the Town Council in regard to the subdivision police accounts. He asked if information could be provided comparing salaries and personnel costs of Town employees with other Towns and private sector employees.*

**K. OTHER BUSINESS**

**2013-0112 Further Redefinition of Voting Districts**

**FURTHER REDEFINITION OF VOTING DISTRICTS**

**This matter was Referred to the RTM Rules & Procedures Committee.**

*Rep. D. Semeraro requested a referral to discuss forming a joint sub-committee with the Town Council to investigate and further redefine voting districts. She feels that Districts 3 and 4 should be reviewed for consolidation and that even further consolidation between districts may be possible.*

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion to adjourn at 9:11 p.m. was made by Rep. Adams, seconded by Rep. Barnhart and so voted unanimously.*

*Attest:*

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk  
Clerk of the RTM*

*Sally A. Whitney, Assistant Town Clerk*